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PLANNING FOR THE FURNITURE.

BY EDWARD HURST BROWN.



TOO often when we come to move into the new house, which has charmed us so much when we have seen it in the architect's drawings, we find to our dismay that it is but ill adapted to any convenient or effective arrangement of furniture. The quaint casement windows we admired so much on the perspective sketch, adapt themselves but ill to any arrangement of shades or curtains, and the picturesque exterior veils wall spaces, ill planned to accommodate those articles which needs must stand against

the sides of the room. In the chamber there is no place for the bed, unless we stand it across a door or window, or unless it comes directly in front of gas outlet or hot air register. We fail to find a convenient place for the bureau where the light will allow the owner to shave or his wife to arrange her hair. In the dining room the sideboard seeks in vain for a bit of wall space big enough to hold it, and as for the piano—well, the parlor is so cut up by doors, bay windows and chimney pieces that we need must stand the piano out in the center of the room and hang an embroidered drapery over it to hide its—anything but ornamental—back.

The rooms are in all probability so cut up that one cannot possibly buy rugs of any regular size that will cover the floors and leave reasonably even margins, and altogether the whole house, which we have been watching over so fondly, during its erection, and looking forward to making it a thing of beauty and a joy for our remaining days, suddenly seems to us to be a misfit, and we fain would throw it back on the builder's hands as easily as we can return a coat to the tailor that fails to adapt itself to our form.

Now while many of these failures and misfits may be laid to the doors of our architect, whom we have perhaps trusted altogether too much to adapt himself to our necessities, and who has perchance thought more of the artistic effect than the comfort and convenience of the house, we are really ourselves, in no small measure, to blame, for not having studied over and pondered the plans, as they were presented to us in the various stages of their completion, to see whether they adapted themselves perfectly to our needs, or afforded proper places for our belongings.

This is an easy thing to do; in fact it is a more simple matter to study and arrange every detail of the furnishing upon the floor plans of our contemplated house than it is to move the actual furniture about the rooms until we arrive at a satisfactory arrangement. Of course we should measure every pet piece of furniture that must find a resting place in our new house and make careful memoranda of its width, projection and height. If there are any special pieces of unusual size, our architect should be informed of them and should be instructed to make special provision for them.

Our plans have come to us and are ready for our inspection. It costs far less to make alterations now than it will in the future when these lines become actual creations of brick, stone, wood and plaster. We must provide ourselves with a sheet of cardboard and a draughtsman's scale or two foot rule. Let us suppose that the plans are drawn to the usual scale of a quarter of an inch to the foot. We then lay off on the cardboard, to the same scale, the various articles of furniture we have measured. The bed, which is six feet long and four feet six inches wide, will be represented by a piece of cardboard one and a half inches long and one and one-eighth inches wide, and so on. Each piece should be inscribed with the name of the article of furniture it is supposed to represent. Now let us spread out our plans before us. What

is there more simple than to arrange and rearrange these bits of cardboard on the plans, until we have discovered whether there is a feasible way of furnishing the rooms, so that the windows and doors are not interfered with and sufficient moving space is left for us to get about in. Many an architect adapts this method of proving the practicability of his sketches, though far too many of them never think of adopting this simple expedient.

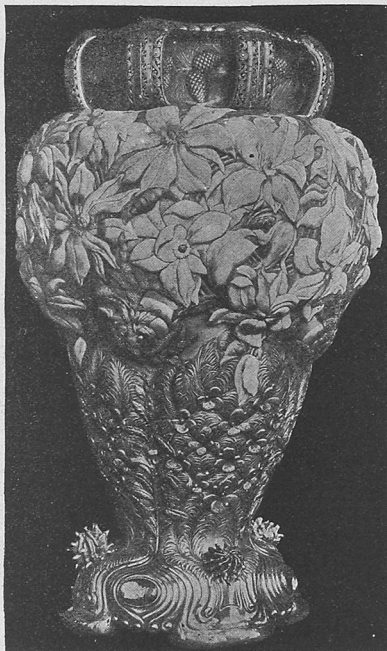
But there are pitfalls to be watched for. These are the hot air registers, gas outlets or steam radiators, so often not marked on the plans, but left for the architect or owner to settle upon after the house is under way. It is dangerous to delay, as these things have a habit sometimes of coming in most unsuspected places, owing to the exigencies of partitions, or the demands of the heating expert. If all of these are not marked upon your plans, send them back to your architect and request him to study out their positions before you come to a final decision. It may delay getting your estimates for a few days, but you will save worry and trouble later on, and may even succeed in getting better prices. These points have to be settled upon some time. It might as well be done now.

Then there are doors. What bothersome things they are, and how they swing out into the room and interfere with our furnishing. As a general rule, bedroom doors should be so hung that they will conceal the room in opening rather than expose it. Especially is this desirable in case of sickness, when the opened door may constantly cause draughts upon the bed, which might have easily been avoided, had the hinges only been upon the other jamb. Study these carefully upon the plans, and sometimes you will find places where doors interfere with one another; a little ingenious contriving will oftentimes remedy this.

These are hints as to the method to be pursued in so studying the plans of the new house as to avoid those disagreeable experiences which so often come of rooms that cannot be furnished, and of houses that prove constant annoyances because of the little irritable inconveniences that one constantly blames his lack of foresight for permitting to exist.

As regards those unfortunate people who must rent houses built by somebody else, the avarice of the owner and the incompetence of the architect combined make life miserable. No two sections of plain wall surface in any apartment are of the same size, and all are of unequal dimensions, requiring special furniture for each house moved into.

It is the attention to these little details, far more than the mere beauty of design of the exterior, or the great charm of decoration of the interior, which makes the house a home, and more than a mere habitation.



AN ELIZABETHAN BANQUET HALL.



WE have much pleasure in placing before our readers the picture exhibit of Messrs. Hampton & Sons, the great English firm of interior specialists and furniture manufacturers.

Convinced not only that the World's Columbian Exposition was going to be the great crowning event of the nineteenth century, but also that the American people were able to fully appreciate the beauty and value of the best decorative art that Europe could put before them, Messrs. Hampton & Sons determined that the entire resources of their London establishments should be concentrated on making such an exhibit as should be worthy alike of their own reputation and the greatness of the occasion. Accordingly the very choicest work of their best artists and most skilled handicraftsmen was unsparingly devoted to the production of the superb hall that is now so conspicuous an ornament to the British section, and one of the most interesting, instructive and valuable exhibit of the entire Fair.

Built in "the spacious times of Great Elizabeth," when Shakespeare was in his prime and England's glory was at its height, Hatfield House

is rich in intimate associations with the great Queen. The house is universally acknowledged to be one of the finest specimens of Elizabethan work in England, and this banquet hall is one of the most richly fitted of its many historical apartments.

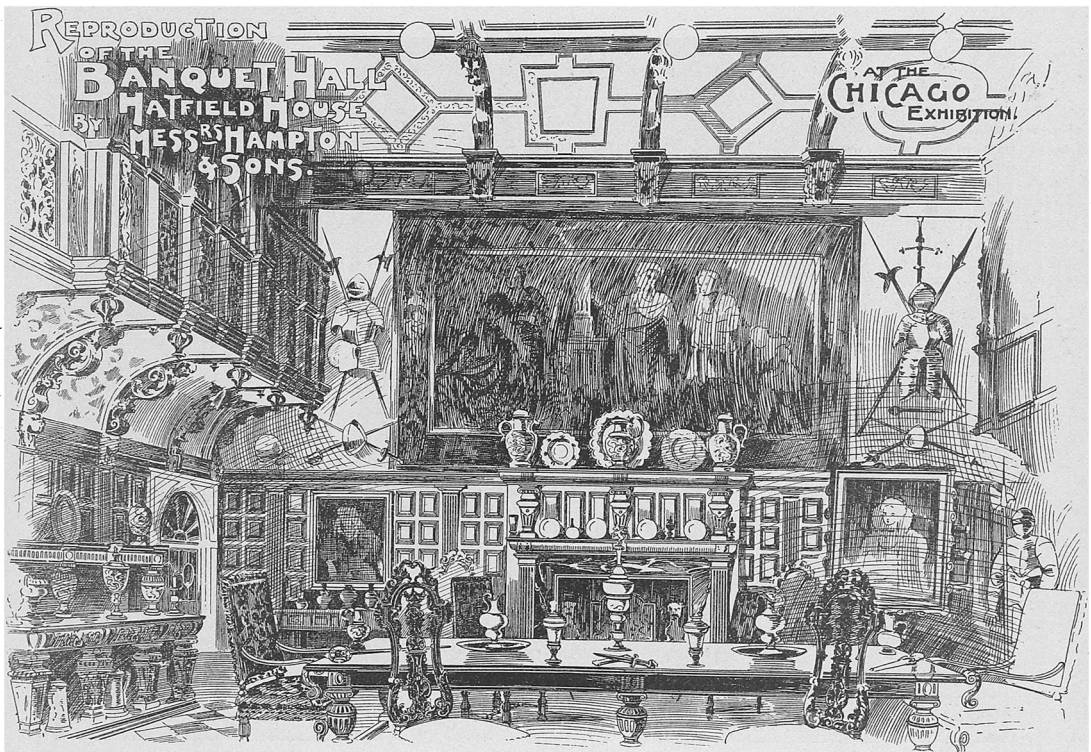
By permission of the Marquis of Salisbury, Hampton & Sons' modelers and artists took plaster casts and sketches to scale of all the important details of the richly carved woodwork, modeled plaster work, etc., and for nearly nine months their best carvers and cabinet-makers were almost exclusively engaged in executing the work from these models. A more thorough and conscientiously faithful reproduction could not have been made. Such extraordinary pains having been taken to secure accuracy in the reproduction, and the appointments with which it is enriched being largely antique, it is obvious that every detail of the exhibit will amply repay the closest and most careful study; indeed it is only by careful examination of the workmanship throughout that the full value and beauty of the exhibit can be realized.

The hall was eventually erected in the Manufacturers' Building by English workmen specially sent over from the London works. The size

swords, etc. All the examples of old armor are, without exception, genuine antique pieces, from the celebrated collection of Henri Melges of Antwerp. The floor is of black and white marble in 11-inch squares, laid diamond-wise, the centre being covered with a rich, 22 ft. 4 in. x 10 ft. 3 in., antique oriental carpet of bold design.

Two large portraits of "good Queen Bess," hangs upon the wainscoting on the fire-place side of the hall, one being a copy of the famous "Rainbow portrait" by Zuccherro, now in the original hall at Hatfield, and the other a panel portrait, said to be by Bronzino, represents Elizabeth as quite a young woman, and was evidently painted prior to her accession to the throne. An interesting feature of the exhibit was the series of emblazoned silk standards above the portico, bearing the arms of Bacon, Burleigh, Drake and Raleigh.

Around the room and on the tables was arranged a noble display of the finest examples of Elizabethan plate that could be found in the various European museums and private collections. These were reproductions by the well-known firm of Elkington, of Regent Street, London, and include many unique specimens of sixteenth century tankards, flagons, ewers and salvers, chalices, saltcellars, etc., all



THE REPRODUCTION OF THE BANQUET HALL, HATFIELD HOUSE, AT THE CHICAGO EXHIBITION. BY MESSRS. HAMPTON & SONS, LONDON.

of the reproduction was one third less than the original, being 40 by 22 feet, whereas the hall at Hatfield is nearly sixty feet long and proportionately broad.

At one end a "Minstrel Gallery" with elaborately enriched supports and balcony occupied the whole width of the hall, while opposite to this is the famous carved oak screen covering the entire end of the hall with a rich tracery of carved oak. Only the choicest English oak was used and each piece was specially selected for its exceptionally fine figuring. A prominent feature of the room is the large open fire-place, with its bold but severely simple fleur-de-lis andirons, flanked by two great gold leopards supporting scroll-shaped shields, with English hall-mark, date 1600. The original of these is in the Kremlin, Moscow. The ceiling is said to be the first flat ceiling erected in England, all previous halls having gabled, heavily timbered roofs, such as may still be seen in Westminster Hall, London. The spaces between the carved oak cross-beams are filled with panels of modeled plaster work.

Above the fire-place hangs a huge antique tapestry representing the meeting of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, while the wall spaces on either side are decorated with suits of old armor, halberds,

pieces of remarkable interest and beauty, and marvels of the silversmith's art.

Such an apartment would prove eminently desirable, either as a banqueting hall, a billiard-room or a library, to an American mansion, club or hotel.

Far too numerous to be noticed in detail were the many valuable art objects and antiques—old cabinets, chairs, china, armor, Elizabethan books and prints, oriental rugs, etc., etc. (among the last mentioned were six antique Persian rugs, which are absolutely unique, and were, we have no hesitation in saying, the choicest pieces of their kind to be found in the Exhibition), with which the hall is adorned. Suffice it to say, that connoisseurs, collectors and lovers of "old armor, prints, pictures, books, china," here found a veritable mine of such treasures, while to those who have a keen appreciation for modern triumphs of craftsmanship, and of the present great revival of interest in the application of art to industry, the eminence of the name of Messrs. Hampton & Sons in the matters of decorative art was sufficient to secure the whole exhibit that careful examination to which its intrinsic merits entitled it.